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ABSTRACT

A survey of the 1972 and 1973 graduating classes from Sunnyside High School, Tucson, Arizona was conducted to secure information on the effectiveness of vocational training. An instrument was designed to determine placement in areas related to training, additional on-the-job training needed, and academic satisfaction of nonvocational graduates. A 39 percent return was obtained, and results are tabulated and analyzed. Fifty-three percent of the graduates responding were employed, 37 percent were not looking for work, and only 9.6 percent indicated that they were looking for work. Of those working 67 percent said that they were not working in jobs where they had high school training. On-the-job training was not needed by 54 percent of those responding. Where it was required, the length of training for over 50 percent was one to three weeks. The number of graduates in postsecondary education was 48.7 percent. The survey indicated that vocational and academic courses were generally satisfactory in meeting the needs of work and college. Recommendations are given for improving the placement program and increasing the amount of vocational and academic courses. A copy of the survey used and selected comments are included. (Author/EC)

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FINAL REPORT

PROJECT NUMBER 74 RMG-1312
GRANT NUMBER

A SURVEY TO FOLLOW-UP ON GRADUATES OF SUNNYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL TO DETERMINE VOCATIONAL PLACEMENT

Conducted Under
Part C of Public Law 90-576

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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June 10, 1974

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A SURVEY TO FOLLOW-UP ON GRADUATES OF
SUNNYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL TO DETERMINE VOCATIONAL PLACEMENT

SUMMARY

Vocational education must assist graduates in securing job placement in their area of training. A survey was needed to secure information from the last two classes graduating from Sunnyside High School. The instrument was designed to determine placement in areas related to training, additional on-the-job training needed, and academic satisfaction of non-vocational graduates. This study is to be used in conjunction with the September 1973 vocational questionnaire of the Research Coordination Unit.

A survey card was designed using a business reply card that could be completed quickly. Two mailings were used and a high return of thirty-nine percent was secured. The returned cards were tabulated and the following information secured.

Fifty-three percent of the graduates responding were employed with an additional thirty-seven percent not looking for work. Only 9.6% indicated that they were looking for work. Sixty-seven percent said that they were not working in jobs for which they had high school training. Graduates who had vocational training in high school were satisfied with their training. On-the-job training was not needed by fifty-four percent of those responding. Where on-the-job was required the length of training for over fifty percent was 1 to 3 weeks.

The number of Sunnyside graduates in post-secondary education was 48.7% which is an increase since the last survey. College students noted

that the high school academic courses should be strengthened to better prepare students for college.

The survey indicated that vocational and academic courses generally were satisfactory in meeting the needs of work and college. Few suggestions were made to improve or increase courses. Many graduates commented that they needed courses which they could have taken while in high school.

There is an apparent need for placement service improvement by the high school and the state employment service. Too many graduates are unable to find jobs in the area for which they were trained. Career Education should expand to assist students in obtaining classes that will prepare them for the field in which they are interested. Some additional information is needed in the college preparation courses. Periodic surveys should be used to up-date the faculty and administrative efforts toward maintaining a current curriculum for the high school.

STUDENT SURVEY APRIL 1974 Year 1972 & 1973

AT THE PRESENT TIME:

working	144	53%	full time	110	41%
not employed	52	19%	part time	21	7.7%
looking for work	25	9.6%	armed services	14	5%
working and attending school	50	18%			

ARE YOU WORKING IN A JOB FOR WHICH YOU TOOK COURSES HERE:

yes	70	27%	no	175	66%
only occasionally	11	5%			

DID YOU TAKE VOCATIONAL COURSES AT SUNNYSIDE:

yes	188	69%	no	72	26.5%

THE COURSES WERE IN:

home ec.	32	16%	business	110	53%	industrial 64 31%

DID YOU RECEIVE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING SINCE BEGINNING WORK:

yes	110	46%	no	128	54%

LENGTH OF TRAINING IN WEEKS:

1 to 3	43	54%	7 to 10	9	11%
4 to 6	7	9%	11 to 15	5	6%
Over 16	15	19%			

I AM ATTENDING SCHOOL:

U of A	46	35%	Beauty School	5	4%
Pima College	50	38%	Other (name)	18	14%
Trade School	0	0%	Full Time	74	
Business School	13	10%	Part Time	25	

I AM:

single	185	70%	married	74	28%	divorced	6 2%

WHICH HIGH SCHOOL COURSES ARE MOST VALUABLE TO YOU NOW:

english	104	27%	business	96	25%
home ec.	23	6%	industrial	47	12%
fine arts	26	7%	math & science	82	22%

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A SURVEY TO FOLLOW UP ON GRADUATES OF
SUNNYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL TO DETERMINE VOCATIONAL PLACEMENT

Vocational training in high school should assist graduates in securing employment in the area of their interest and training. Since Sunnyside District offers a wide range of vocational courses, a survey of recent graduates was devised to help determine the effectiveness of these offerings. The last two graduating classes 1972 and 1973 were used due to availablity of mailing lists and recent experience in entering the job market.

A short concise survey card was used to encourage graduates to answer quickly. This was in the form of a business reply card that could be completed in less than 10 minutes. In order to get a substantial return of the survey card, a return code was used in order that a second request could be mailed to graduates who did not answer the first one. The second mail out elicited a larger return than the first request. 688 requests were sent out the first run with a return of 108 for 16%. The second mail out resulted in 163 replies for 26%. The total number of returned cards was 271 for 39%. A copy of the survey instrument is attached. The survey card was answered completely on every return and additional comments were added on a significant number. (26%)

SURVEY RESULTS

The first inquiry was: At the present time I am:

WORKING	144	53%
FULL TIME	110	41%
PART TIME	21	7.7%
NOT EMPLOYED	22	18%
LOOKING FOR WORK	25	9.6%
WORKING / ATTENDING SCHOOL	50	18%
ARMED SERVICES	14	5%

The number of graduates looking for work appears to be normal for the age group. Most of this number are from the class of 1973 (68%). Graduates checked more than one answer for this question as expected.

The second inquiry was: Are you working in a job for which you took courses here?

YES	70	27%
NO	175	67%
ONLY OCCASIONALLY	11	5%

The figures indicate that not enough students are taking courses that are helpful to them on the job. It is in this area that Career Education can be effective. Through work observation, exploration and experience from K-9, it is expected that more students will enroll in courses relating to an occupation and will be able to obtain employment in an area of their interest.

The third inquiry was: Did you take vocational courses at Sunnyside?

YES	188	69%
NO	83	31%

(if the graduate did not answer, it was assumed that no vocational courses were taken).

The courses were in:

HOME ECONOMICS	32	16%
BUSINESS	110	53%
INDUSTRIAL	64	31%

(Vocational courses may have been taken in more than one area).

The percentage in this area seem higher than could be expected. The school enrollment in vocational classes for 1973-74 is less than 10% (State approved two period vocational classes and co-operative education classes). It is doubtful that this information is usable since such a high number indicated they had taken vocational courses. Two things could have caused this result. (1) A large number responding to the survey were vocational students; or (2) all business, home economic, and industrial classes were considered to be vocational.

The fourth inquiry was: Did you receive on-the-job training since beginning work?

YES	110	46%
NO	128	54%

(Only 70 of the 110 who said they received on-the-job training gave the length of the training).

(Those in the Armed Services normally had lengthy training periods).

LENGTH OF TRAINING IN WEEKS:

1 to 3 Weeks	43	54%
4 to 6 Weeks	7	9%
7 to 10 Weeks	9	11%
11 to 15 Weeks	5	6%
Over 16 Weeks	15	19%

This is an encouraging point since less than one-half were required to receive on-the-job training and less than one-fourth needed more than three weeks of training. This would indicate that Sunnyside graduates are prepared to enter the world of work.

The fifth inquiry was: I am attending school:

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA	46	35%
PIMA COLLEGE	50	38%
TRADE SCHOOL	0	0%
BUSINESS COLLEGE	13	10%
BEAUTY COLLEGE	5	4%
OTHER	18	14%
TOTAL ATTENDING COLLEGE	132	48.7%
FULL TIME STUDENT	74	
PART TIME STUDENT	25	
CLASS OF 1973	77	58.3%
CLASS OF 1972	55	41.7%

(Some graduates who indicated they were attending school did not answer whether part time or full time).

The percentage of graduates continuing their education is increasing. This is probably due to Pima Community College which attracted 38% of those responding to the survey.

The sixth inquiry was: I am:

SINGLE	185	70%
MARRIED	74	28%
DIVORCED	6	2%

Graduates who have married are nearly equally divided between the classes of 1972 (38) and 1973 (36). Five of these responding as divorced were from the class of 1972.

The seventh inquiry was: Which high school courses are most valuable to you now?

ENGLISH	104	27%
BUSINESS	96	25%
MATH AND SCIENCE	82	22%
INDUSTRIAL	47	12%
FINE ARTS	26	7%
HOME ECONOMICS	23	6%

Multiple answers were expected and received in this area. Social Studies was not included since nearly all courses in Social Studies are required for graduation.

The eighth inquiry was: Please list any courses you wish you had taken.

(Fifty-eight different courses were entered in this area with 275 responses. Graduates expressed many desires in these areas. They seemed to feel a real need for courses that they had not taken).

BUSINESS EDUCATION	109	FINE ARTS	18
INDUSTRIAL	36	LANGUAGE	17
MATH	29	HOME ECONOMICS	15
SCIENCE	25	OTHER	8
ENGLISH	19		

The ninth inquiry was: Please list any courses you feel should be changed.

Thirty-four courses were listed in this area with 89 responses. The only department that drew a heavy response was the English Department (28). Students in college felt that the courses in English should be more difficult and emphasize grammar and writing. Other comments were scattered over the total high school curriculum area.

The tenth inquiry asked for additional comments. Seventy graduates added notes in this area on a wide variety of subjects. The largest number of comments were concerned with English and the problems encountered in college English classes. This is a normal reaction on entering college since nearly all first-year college students encounter some problem in adjusting to new study habits and environment.

CONCLUSION

It is apparent that employment needs are being met by Sunnyside vocational courses. Of the 144 respondents who indicated that they were working full time or part time, 70 indicated they were using these vocational skills gained in school with 11 additional graduates using these skills occasionally. Graduates did not indicate the need for additional vocational courses. In listing the courses they wish that they had taken, all vocational courses desired were courses that are now being offered. Courses listed, but not offered at Sunnyside High School, were non-vocational.

Courses required for graduation have been reduced to 9½ credits. Since the minimum credits required for graduation is 20, this allows 10½ credits in elective courses. Students are allowed to take up

24 credits while enrolled in high school. There were no indicators that graduates did not have the opportunity to take the courses needed for vocation preparation. Some respondents expressed the desire to enroll in more than one vocational course their senior year (two hour block of time), but were unable to do so due to these classes being scheduled the same periods each day.

Additional post-secondary on-the-job training was not required in the majority of cases. Less than half of the graduates working were required to take further training. Almost three-fourths of those needing further training completed it in ten weeks or less. Over one-half had less than three weeks of on-the-job training.

Fifty-three per cent of the graduates responding are employed, but and additional thirty-seven per cent are not looking for work indicating that they are full time students, homemakers, or have other reasons for not working. Ofthe graduates working, seventy-six per cent have taken vocational training.

Twenty-two per cent of the graduates with vocational training are presently employed in jobs for which they received training or in related fields. This reflects a real need for placement assistance from school and state employment services.

A review of academic courses seems to be indicated since many college students suggested that courses be strengthened. There is a need to have access to surveys of other high school graduates and college instructors to verify these comments. Since students in these two graduating classes had a great amount of choice in selecting courses and teachers, it is difficult to determine if individuals selected courses that were designed to prepare them for college or selected courses for other reasons, i. e. friends, teachers, period offered, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Academic courses should be reviewed to be certain that college bound students receive adequate preparation. Surveys from other schools should be compared to Sunnyside's survey. Interviews should be arranged with college teachers of first-year students to determine if the reported difficulties are universal.

(2) The placement program for graduates should be improved. An effort should be made to help place every graduate who asks for help. Contacts should be maintained in Industrial areas to assist vocational graduates to enter the field in which they have been trained.

(3) Career Education should be extended to all district schools as soon as feasible. Efforts need to be concentrated on grades 4-9 to widen exposure so that courses could be chosen more wisely upon high school entry.

(4) Students in vocational courses should have opportunities to work in industrial plants for short periods of time. The need for practical hands-on experience over-rides the need for wages.

(5) Vocational advisory committees should review vocational courses content on a regular basis.

(6) The graduate survey should be repeated every three years. As soon as feasible, a survey should be made on graduates in their fourth year after graduation.

SELECTED COMMENTS FROM SURVEY

PREPARATION

"There should be special elective classes for seniors or juniors to let them get a view of what will be expected of them when they finally don't have school to lean on. From various points of view."

"The Math and Science I use is the every day type needed to keep the budget and balance of a checkbook and a budget."

"More career counseling should be available. Help given to someone to decide on at least a tentative major. More college prep."

"I wish we could have learned more about buying houses, deeds, joint tenancy, taking title of things, etc. I am in the title business, and work at Lawyers Title and I found it was rough learning it. The classes I did take did help and I'm pleased with what I learned.

BUSINESS

"My COE training helped me immediately in the type of work I am now doing."

"The COOP courses are the best thing in the world to help a person learn about the world of work and the people in it."

"Secretarial Training is a great course. I recommend it most highly to students."

"You need more career courses other than business because I myself would not like to work in an office."

ENGLISH

"I was unprepared to attend the University of Arizona in the field that I had chosen. Grammar and foriegn language should be mandatory."

"More comprehensive reading should be applied."

"I feel English classes should be stressed more than they were when I took them, for I have found no value in what I had learned."

"Even with advanced courses in English the amount is not enough background for college English."

"More formal English classes to help with reports and term papers, and English usage."

"Students planning to attend the University of Arizona should take an English class in grammar and sentence structure."

INDUSTRIAL

"Auto mechanics--make it more interesting, make it like a real garage, or have a section on competition work."

"I think that industrial classes are good, but you need more on-the-job training (I didn't get). Fine Arts is OK, but not for work."

"Industrial courses should be connected to local industry. (Mines, aircraft, or ranching, etc.)."

"There should be a course made to teach the use of many different tools and also teach such things as industrial electronics, pipe fitting, plumbing, hydraulics, etc."

"One should be able to take two vocational courses at the same time."

OTHER

"I found all courses satisfactory, but I should have tried harder."

"I really liked school at Sunnyside. It was four of the best years of my life."

"To me, this school is a great school. I never had any difficulty with it. It is the best school in the world."

"I don't feel any courses should be changed, students need to be guided to all the courses you have to offer."

"I am glad to hear that Sunnyside is trying to fill the students needs for their future requirements; you might help them more if you gave the students more say in what is happening."

"American Problems is the only one you need in history. The rest you have in grade school."

"Spanish should be required of Spanish kids. There should be a course in music appreciation. The long hour subject course should be in classes where you're having difficulty."

"I think the students should be made aware of all the things the counselors can help them with."

"All of the learning should be fun, not just work. Keep all students interested. If I could only be a senior again. I would do all the things I did, different. I would help the teacher, instead of fighting them.

"Counselors should emphasize the need for a student to take courses in a wide a field as possible--less specialization."

"Students should be more fairly recognized with grading or ranking of classes not simply number grades."

"High school courses should relate more to the students future needs such as job training and preparation for college; during the last two years of education. The last two years of my high school education were a great waste."

"Now that I'm out of Sunnyside and am going to the University of Arizona, I wish the classes at Sunnyside were harder. I made almost straight 1.5 at Sunnyside and now having trouble because the classes at Sunnyside were so easy I didn't have to study."

"It's hard to change courses because most high school students don't know what they need or want until they are out of school."

"I wish I had taken school more seriously, and I wish the importance of courses would have been emphasized more. Education is one of the best things in life."

Dear Sunnyside Graduate:

The Career Education Center is making a follow-up study on the progress of recent graduates of Sunnyside High School. Your information will be very helpful to us in determining how we can improve the academic and vocational programs offered to Sunnyside students.

Please fill out and mail the attached card as soon as possible. The card is stamped and addressed so that it is only necessary to take a few minutes to help complete this survey. It is not necessary for you to sign your name unless you desire to do so.

If you have any questions about this survey or wish further information about changes in our program, please call the Career Education Center at 294-1411, Ext. 286. Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this card.

Sincerely yours,

Career Education Director

Sunnyside High School
1725 East Bilby Road
Tucson, Arizona 85706

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TO:

PLEASE CHECK THE FOLLOWING BLANKS THAT APPLY TO YOU:

At the present time I am: working____ not employed____ looking for work____
full time____ part time____ armed service____ working & attending school____

Are you working in a job for which you took courses here? Yes____ No____
Only occasionally _____

Did you take vocational courses at Sunnyside? Yes____ No____
The courses were in Home Ec.____ Business____ Industrial____

Did you receive on-the-job training since beginning work? Yes____ No____
Length of training in weeks _____

I am attending school: Univ. of Ariz.____ Pima College____ trade school____
business college____ beauty school____ other (name) _____
full time____ part time____

I am single____ married____ divorced____

Which high school courses are most valuable to you now? English____ Business____
Home Ec.____ Industrial____ Fine Arts____ Math & Science____

Please list any courses that you wish you had taken: _____

Please list any courses that you feel should be changed: _____

Additional comments:

Year _____